



## **WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU**

### **FACT SHEET**

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
445 12th STREET SW  
WASHINGTON DC 20554

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### **Information about the CB Radio Service**

#### **What is CB?**

CB is one of the Citizens Band Radio Services. It is a two-way voice communication service for use in your personal and business activities. Expect a communication range of one to five miles.

#### **Do I need an FCC license for my CB unit?**

You may operate your CB unit within the territorial limits of the fifty United States, the District of Columbia, and the Caribbean and Pacific Insular areas ("U.S."). You may also operate your CB on or over any other area of the world, except within the territorial limits of areas where radio-communications are regulated by another agency of the U.S. or within the territorial limits of any foreign government. You may also be permitted to use your CB unit in Canada subject to the rules of the Canadian Department of Communications.

#### **May I raise the power output of my CB unit?**

Absolutely not! That would be unfair to the other users sharing the channel by raising the level of radio noise. You must not attach a "linear," "linear amplifier" or any other type of power amplifier to your CB unit (CB Rule 11). Moreover, you must not modify your CB unit internally. Doing so cancels its type acceptance and you forfeit your authorization to use it (CB Rule 10).

#### **How high may I put my CB antenna?**

#### **Which CB channels may I use?**

You may use any of the 40 CB channels on a "take-turns" basis. These channels must be shared by all CB users. No CB channel is assigned to any specific individual or organization (CB Rule 7). Be cooperative. Keep your communications short. Never talk with another station for more than 5 minutes continuously. Then wait at least one minute before starting another communication (CB Rule 16). Use Channel 9 only for emergency communications or for traveler assistance.

#### **What are "ten-codes"?**

Ten-codes are operating aids used by public safety and other professional communicators. The FCC does not regulate the meaning of the ten-codes. CB Rule 12 authorizes CB operators to use ten-codes.

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**Where do I obtain my CB "handle?"**

You may use on-the-air a pseudonym ("handle") of your choosing.

**Are there other private Personal Radio Services  
for short distance two-way voice communications?**

Yes. There is another Citizens Band Radio Service, the Family Radio Service ("FRS"). You are authorized by FRS Rule 1 to operate an FCC-certified FRS unit in accordance with the rules. No license is issued. Expect a communication range of less than one mile. See Part 95, Subpart B of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. §§

members. Expect a communication range of five to twenty-five miles. See Part 95, Subpart A of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. §§ 95.1-95.181.

The rules are published annually in the of Federal 47, Telecommunication, Part 80 to End. They are written in plain language to make them easy to read and understand. Order from the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-9328. A copy of the operating rules (§§ 95.401-95.428), current at the time of packing, must be furnished by the manufacturer with each CB set sold. For technical information, see §§ 95.601-95.669.

Above are general answers to the questions most frequently asked about CB. For complete information, see the Commission's Rules for the Citizens Band (CB) Radio Service, 47 C.F.R. §§ 95.401-95.428.